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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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->From the Editor’s Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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Phew! Does anyone have any suggestions for a cool spot - say, maybe somewhere in the low 80’s - that I could find? <g> This has been one helluva summer - literally! Even having our own pool doesn’t provide relief all day - at some point, we have to get out! The humidity has been unrelenting all week. As I’m sitting here making the final check on this week’s issue, three fans blowing warm air at my back,the thunder is roaring in the background. Just what we need is a cooling rain and then a steam bath when it’s all over! <g> Oh well, the "fortunate" part to all of this is that it’s so hot here that I don’t have the energy to editorialize this week. I just get to complain about the heat that most of you out there are likely experiencing as well! Stay cool!

Until next time...

NED Player v3.2/FALCON Released

From: Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

NED Player v3.2/FALCON released

Features:

* Direct from disk playing
* Ability to change playing rate on the fly
* Ability to play packed and 16 bits files
* Supported file formats:
  WAV, SND/AU, DVSM, AVR, HSN, AIFF, IFF, SAM

News:
* better quality during DD playing at 16 bits

http://www.stud.fee.vutbr.cz/~xsumbe00/n_player.htm

MP2 Decoder Updated

From: Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

NoCrew have released v0.995 of their DSP MP2-Decoder for Falcons. New things are much improved external clock detection and some new shoe-commands.

http://wombat.ludvika.se/ae/dhs_files/misc/mp2_0995.zip

[This news item courtesy of http://www.atari.org

and Anders Eriksson- http://dhs.atari.org]

Clash of the Kings Available on Cartridge

From: Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

The Analog Computing classic "The Clash of the Kings" is now on cartridge. It works on all 8-bit Atari computers with at least 16k of RAM.

For ordering info, go to:
http://www.atarisales.com

[This news item courtesy of http://www.atari.org]

Atari Fonts

From: Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

Fancy using the Atari font on your web site or publication?
Here it is, faithfully recreated for Macintosh and Windows by ShyFonts.
Download it from IconsPlus.
http://www.iconsplus.com/

[This news item courtesy of http://www.atari.org]

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, I'm coming up to my vacation from work. It's an interesting process to say the least.

First of all, I'm one of the few folks in my place of business who is busy all of the time. I've been there longer than anyone else (even in the seventy years that the company has been in business, I think), and know every process that is used, both in the production area and the office. For this reason, it seems that I'm the one they come to when a worker is having problems with a job, when a customer is having trouble with a product, when someone in the office promises a delivery that doesn't give us enough time to actually produce the product, or when someone just plain doesn't feel like doing their job.

On top of this, there are several processes that 'belong' to me alone. No one else has taken the time to research what needs to be done or how

making certain changes affects the finished product.

Since no one can or will take care of these things during my vacation, I usually have to make sure that they're taken care of before I go on vacation. It takes a lot of extra hours, extra planning, and a whole bunch of patience to make sure that things are as they should be, but it's the only way I know of to ensure that I don't get a phone call while I'm trying to enjoy myself during the next two weeks. Of course, the fact that they know that I'll be home most of the time will make it easier for them to fall back on "good ol' Joe", but I figure that if I simply avoid answering the phone during business hours I'll be okay. <smile>

So basically I've got two weeks of vacation, and it'll take me THREE weeks to recover from all the extra nonsense I'm going through now. Sometimes it just seems that it'd be easier to not take the vacation at all.

Well, anyway, I guess you've gotten a feel for what I'm going through at the moment. You probably don't care though, because you're in the same boat as I am. It seems that we all are these days. There's more and more to do and less and less time to get it done.

As a side-note, the A-ONE Magazine web pages at http://a1mag.atari.org are now up to speed (well, they were before THIS issue came out) and I hope that the next two weeks will give me the chance to come up with some decent templates to make changes and additions easier and less time consuming.

How did I find the time to update the pages if I'm so busy at work, you ask? Simple. I DIDN'T! The pages have been updated by our good friend and benefactor Rob Mahlert of Atari Users Net (http://www.atari-users.net). Rob did a great job getting the pages current for us, and I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to him.... THANKS ROB!

Rob has started an Atari-only banner exchange program recently, and I'm proud to say that A-ONE Magazine was one of the first to join up. There's a banner at the bottom of our main page (http://a1mag.atari.org) that'll help you get to the low-down on what's going on, or you can go to the Atari Users Net pages and join up from there. Check it out... it's well worth a quick read.

On the subject of SETI@home's TEAM ATARI group, I'm proud to tell you that there are currently seventeen people participating, and have contributed more than 6,700 hours of CPU time. There are those who will say that since there are about 918,000 people participating in this project, and that they have contributed about 334 MILLION hours of CPU time, it makes our contribution seem fairly small. They are right, but if you "do the math" (do you remember that catch-phrase?), you will realize that the average CPU time contributed for each person participating is about 364 hours. On the Atari side, it works out to about 394 hours per person. Slightly ahead of the curve.

Doesn't that just sum us up perfectly?? We're "slightly ahead of the curve". And to put the icing on the cake, some of the users in the general population are actually corporations like Microsoft, SUN, IBM, and Apple, who have many machines working under one account (which is perfectly acceptable). It's nice to see that corporations can still do things that don't directly benefit them, but it does skew the results a

bit when you look at individual users.

Of course, if we were able to use our computers of choice, I'm sure that there'd be many more than 17 people working with TEAM ATARI, but I don't know if we'll ever see an Atari version of this software.

Oh, I almost forgot... If you have no idea of what I'm talking about, SETI@home is a project using home computers to analyze data from the Arecibo Radio Telescope in Puerto Rico for possible extraterrestrial signals... a message from ET! There is software for Mac, PC, Linux, Unix, and several other operating systems... but not for the ST. Read last week's column. I laid it all out there and don't want to burden those who saw it last week with it again. If you have any questions about TEAM ATARI, feel free to email me at jmirando@portone.com and use "TEAM ATARI" in the subject line. I really enjoy 'spreading the word' about this project because it's fascinating on two levels. One is the the possibility of discovering an extraterrestrial signal. The other is the idea of an internet super-computer. Linking all of these personal computers together via the 'net makes it the largest, most powerful super-computer in the world. Now THAT'S cool!

Well, let's get on with the reason for this column... all the news, hints, tips, and info available about our favorite computer.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

Oystein Trollsaas asks for hard drive help:

"My equipment is a Falcon with 14Mb ram, and I have now two SCSI-2 HD's connected to it, both of them Quantum, one lightning and one fireball tm 21 s 011, 3.5 series. I'm using the FALCON for CAF, but just now I can not use it, the reason as explained above (can't drive the hard disks with HDDRIVER, bombs and a noisy picture for two seconds shows up and no hard disk opens). I can open the Quantum lightning with AHDI, but not the fireball, that was the reason I bought HDDRIVER. I tried the DEMO version before I bought the real one and at one point I managed to install the HDDRIVER and open both of the HD's, but I did something wrong, maybe double installed the HDDRIVER or used both of the DRIVERS (AHDI and HDDRIVER) at the same time. When I tried the demo version HDDRIVER now, "TOS error #35", showed up without bombs and noise picture. Something has happened with the configuration or inside the FALCON, I don't know! Now I can't even open the CAF (after driving the HD with AHDI), because the message "Data on the disc C: may be damaged" appears. This is very frustrating, I hope you can help me! I have read the manual and followed it, but I think the mistake have been done before I tried to install the real HDDRIVER. Now I have cleaned up the AUTO folder and the CPX's, but nothing seems to work!"

Robert Schaffner tells Oystein:

"CAF doesn't have his own driver? CAF is not available here. ONLY an idea.

Othersides, some fireball models can't boot on an Atari.

Normally it's no problem to replace AHDI with HDDriver, both are "AHDI" compatible. Sounds like if you don't remove some parts of AHDI while you use HDDriver. HDDriver installed hddriver.sys on root of you first device, maybe on internal IDE Part. C:

(Or the first bootable device)

That’s the driver for all connected drivers if hddriver found while run the hddriver setup. (Watch the IDs! You can switch several IDs ON/OFF) After setup you have to reboot the machine.
hddriver.sys will be loaded and mount all active drives. (Normally)

I’m really sure you use two hard drive drivers at the same time. That will not work. Can’t gave you a complete description how to install the driver, can’t see your system. I’m only writing my ideas.

Derruck Croker adds:

"The proper way to de-install HDDriver is to load its utility program and use the "de-install HDdriver" menu item.

If you’re having problems getting your drives to boot I advise first switching your Atari on, then once it has booted to the desktop, switch your drives on. Then take your HDDriver master disk and run the prog that is in the AUTO folder. That should log all the connected drives. Then you can run the HDDRiver utility prog and install the booter on whatever drive you like.

In theory there is no need to de-install any other driver that might be on the drive.

Robert pointed out that some drives can’t be booted from (but you could use the prog in the AUTO folder copied to the AUTO folder of another floppy disk and boot from this IIRC), and that CAF needed its own driver anyway. I can’t comment further on either of these two scenarios."

Claes Holmerup adds one very important piece of information:

"Don’t forget to remove any hard disk driver you’ve put in the AUTO-folder. They don’t belong there - and they don’t get disabled if you re-install HDDriver..."

Sasa Andrijasevic asks:

"Does someone know what the rgb adapter is and for what can be used on Falcon? Is it the similar thing as vga adapter and can I connect my TV over it to the Falcon?

Does someone have spare one?? <grin>"

Ronald Hall tells Sasa:

"They are used for hooking up an SC1224 or SC1435 Atari RGB monitor to the Falcon... Sorry-only have one, myself!"

John Kolak adds:

"I have a spare one. It’s the same as the Falcon VGA adaptor, but it accepts an ST color monitor jack. The Falcon has a separate RCA jack on the back to run to your TV (RF signal, channel 2 and 3, or 3 and 4 as I recall)."

Claes Holmerup posts:

"I’m very proud to say that the number of visitors at my site has reached the number of 10000 - something I didn’t even dream of when I started making the pages from the start.

I hope everyone’s found interesting reading there - I’ve focused mainly on Falcon and music issues and it seems like I’ve contributed with some useful info to the Atari community, judging from the e-mails of appreciation I’ve received :) Of course, I’ll try to develop the site even more and make it even better - little by little...

Go there and take a look - so I can brag about having even more visitors...<smile>"

Joe Connor tells Claes:

"Congratulations.

We also feature a review of your pages in Atari Computing Issue 14 (now at printers) so hopefully that will send a few more people your way!"

To what Joe said, we at A-ONE Mag would like to say "Way to go Claes!"

Paul Mac asks for info about ST resolutions:

"My ST is all setup now exactly how I want it , except that it all takes place on a rather dull mono monitor.

What are the options nowadays for improving the graphical capabilities of my 4mb STe?

If possible I’d like to combine such an option with an accelerator.

The veloce from TUS looks excellent , I especially like the extra ram but of course there is no improvement in resolution."

Nicholas Bales tells Paul:

"There aren’t really any modern practical solutions for this. You could adapt an old Mega ST video board, but this will be a lot of hacking, and a lot of trouble just finding such a board. ST high-res is quite comfortable to work with, in my opinion."

The inimitable Dr. Clu posts:

"[Been trying for FOUR DAYS to get this question out. After rebuilding my desktop and re-installing my browser software... I’m back!]

[This was on the Macintosh... which till now had worked fine.]

I recently went and bought CAB 2.7 from Systems for Tomorrow, and the installation went great. It reminded me of the easy install applications of the Macintosh world.

I’ve noticed many improvements with CAB 2.7 over 1.5.. :) and even my PC oriented brother-in-law was impressed that the Atari could surf the internet as well as it does.

But I noticed a problem when I started trying to access "Atari Advantage" on Delphi and check my E-mail (HTML/website based) on Yahoo.   In both cases I would enter my name and password, and in both cases, the

information was "redirected". At which point it would give me the option to "get this", "repost" or "cancel".

I found out that my browser was not accepting cookies. So what I did was change the browser so that it would accept cookies. (option in CAB).

I also tried to update my system clock to current (or as much as current with my 1040 STE without battery backup), and made sure I had CAB.OVL 1.3016, which is the latest overlay and was the one that came with Cab 2.7.

Despite all this, I am still not able to convince these websites that my browser accepts cookies. I am curious what else I can try?"

Ronald Hall tells the good doctor:

"I can't help with the cookies but Ram is easy to check. I'm assuming you are using X-Control, right? Just go to the control panel, drop it down, pick the "General" CPX, and then click on Status. It will show you various things, including Free ST Ram and TOS version."

Terry May adds his own experiences:

"Try using the CAB.OVL that comes with 2.7. I've found that it does a better job of supporting cookies than Dan Ackerman's version. And I've had very little luck at all with Olivier Booklage's, as far as cookies are concerned. I've found several sites that I can't get to with anything other than CAB's own CAB.OVL. (Unfortunately, there are many sites I still can't get to, for one reason or another.)

Of course, you'll need to use I-Connect with the CAB.OVL that comes with CAB, as STinG/STiK won't work with it."

Well folks, I know the column is kind of thin this time around, but please remember that I'm a bit distracted this week. Next week should be better, so until then remember to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Nintendo Chairman to Retire!
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""" Console Olympics! Biohazard!
New Sports Games! Star Trek!
And much more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

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Nintendo Chairman To Retire

Howard Lincoln, who helped build Nintendo into a household name in the United States, is planning to retire from the video game maker next year.

Lincoln, chairman of the company since 1983, will remain on Nintendo of America's board, though he won't be involved in day-to-day operations, said Perrin Kaplan, a spokeswoman for the Redmond-based company.

Lincoln will retire Feb. 14, his 60th birthday, Kaplan said.

His retirement announcement has fueled speculation that the Seattle Mariners co-owner could be in line for the team's chief executive post.

Lincoln is among 16 owners of the Seattle Mariners and has been at the forefront of a recent battle between the owners and county politicians over financing of Safeco Field, the team's new ballpark.

Kaplan refused to speculate on whether Lincoln would be taking over the Mariners except to say, ''He's obviously very deeply involved with the Mariners and has a deep love for baseball as well."

Mariners CEO John Ellis, 70, recently told The Seattle Times that he was considering retiring as head of the team.

Under Lincoln's leadership, Nintendo of America, the U.S. subsidiary of the Japanese game maker, grew from a tiny startup with a half-dozen employees to a major powerhouse in the video game business.

Nintendo is the No. 2 seller of video games in the nation, after Sony. The company's video game systems include Nintendo 64 and Game Boy.

Activision to Bring the First 'Star Trek' Game to the PlayStation

Activision, Inc. announced Monday that gamers should prepare to enter ''space, the final frontier," when it releases the first ''Star Trek" game for the PlayStation game console. Featuring a compelling story based on ''Star Trek: The Next Generation" episodes, the space shooter is expected to ship in summer 2000.

The game places players in control of the Federation's newest single pilot fighters and challenges them to undertake a voyage that will dare them to investigate strange space anomalies, defend the Federation against alien threats and uncover the mystery which has opened a rift in the Beta Quadrant.

''We are very excited to bring the 'Star Trek' universe to the PlayStation game console for the first time," stated Mitch Lasky, executive vice president, Activision Studios. ''The game's rich storyline and action-packed gameplay will appeal to a wide audience, including causal and hardcore gamers and 'Star Trek' fans alike."

A visually stunning, fast-paced space shooter, the game features 30 diverse missions in which players pilot multiple vessels, including all new ships, in an attempt to defend the Federation from a mysterious threat. As they progress through the missions, players will encounter classic ‘‘Star Trek" characters, including The Borg and Klingons, as well as a never before seen alien race. In game energy management, shielding systems and cut-scenes enhance the overall ‘‘Star Trek" experience. The game is being developed for Activision by Warthog.

Capcom To Launch New Biohazard Game In September

Japan’s Capcom Co Ltd said on Wednesday it would launch a new version of its popular Biohazard game software series for use on Sony Corp’s PlayStation game console in late September.

A Capcom spokesman said it aimed to sell 1.5 million units of the new version, Biohazard 3.

The Biohazard series was first introduced in March 1996 and has since sold more than 11 million units worldwide.

The company said in June that it would develop a different version of the Biohazard game for use on Sega Enterprises Ltd’s Dreamcast machine and a new version of Biohazard 2 for Nintendo Co Ltd’s Nintendo64.

Capcom intends to continue the strategy of diversifying its game platforms in order to make the best use of its software resources, the company said at that time.

FOX Sports Interactive Signs Stanley Cup Winner Mike Modano to Endorse ‘‘NHL Championship 2000’’ Video Game

FOX Sports Interactive announced that it has secured an endorsement deal with Mike Modano of the National Hockey League’s Stanley Cup Champion Dallas Stars for its upcoming ‘‘NHL Championship 2000" video game.

The deal includes the use of Modano’s image on the product packaging for the PC and PlayStation game console titles. He will conduct a series of media interviews and participate in retail appearances, promotions and Internet chats at foxsports.com. This agreement marks the first time in which an athlete wearing a Dallas Stars uniform appears on the cover of an NHL video game. ‘‘Our goal is to provide sports gamers with the most fun and exciting NHL gaming experience this fall, and we are pleased to have one of the NHL’s best and most popular players involved," said Dave Neubecker, executive director of marketing for FOX Sports Interactive. ‘‘The Stanley Cup Playoffs and Finals proved that Mike Modano is a hard-core player who is at the top of his game. He is the perfect choice to appear on the cover of ‘NHL Championship 2000."’

Modano, who had the assist on the game-winning goal to capture the Stanley Cup for the Dallas Stars in the triple overtime final, is a ten-year NHL veteran, perennial All-Star and league scoring leader. He was also a member of the 1998 U.S. Olympic hockey team. In addition, Modano’s community leadership and charity involvement have contributed

to his high esteem among players and fans.

Rounding out the ‘‘NHL Championship 2000" team are FOX’s award-winning announcers Kenny Albert (FOX Sports Net affiliate MSG Network) and John Davidson (NHL on FOX, MSG Network), who provide play-by-play commentary for the game. FOX’s renowned broadcast graphics add a dash of ‘‘FOX Attitude" to one of the most anticipated hockey titles of the 1999-2000 NHL season.

Available on both the PlayStation game console and Windows 95/98 CD-ROM formats, ‘‘NHL Championship 2000" features hard checks, quick puck movement and acrobatic goalies brought to life with stunning new 3-D technologies. In addition to playing favorite teams and stars, there will also be options to adjust coaching strategies or act as GM by creating, editing or trading players. Multiple difficulty levels, variable season lengths and support for up to 8 individual players are also integral features in ‘‘NHL Championship 2000."

FOX Sports Interactive Inks Deal With NBA All-Star Steve Smith to Endorse ‘‘NBA Basketball 2000" Video Game

FOX Sports Interactive announced today that it has signed Steve Smith of the National Basketball Association’s Atlanta Hawks to endorse its ‘‘NBA Basketball 2000"(TM) video game, due out this fall.

As part of the deal, Smith will appear on the packaging of the PlayStation game console and Windows 95/98 CD-ROM title -- the first Atlanta Hawks player to appear on the cover of a video game. He will also make public appearances and participate in live Internet chats on foxsports.com as well as consult on the gameplay.

‘‘We’re excited to have such a respected ’go-to guy’ as Steve Smith to help raise awareness for our game. He plays with the kind of intensity that matches the ‘FOX Attitude’ of ‘NBA Basketball 2000,"’ said Dave Neubecker, executive director of marketing for FOX Sports Interactive.

Last season, Smith led the Atlanta Hawks in scoring (18.7 points per game), free throw percentage (.849, 11th overall in the NBA) and three point percentage (.338). Smith has appeared in 44 career NBA playoff games, averaging 18.8 points per game. Additionally, Smith scored 14 points and had 3 rebounds in his All-Star debut in 1998.

Recently, Smith was named to the U.S. Olympic Basketball Team, which will compete in the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia. He was also a member of the 1994 USA Basketball team that captured the gold medal in the World Championship of Basketball.

‘‘NBA Basketball 2000" is one of the most fun and exciting PlayStation and Windows 95/98 video games of the 1999-2000 NBA season. Licensed by the NBA, the game features fast-paced action with all 29 NBA teams plus All-Star and Rookie All-Star teams, authentic uniforms and all of the current players in immaculate 3-D detail with hundreds of new animations and new moves such as reverse dunks, fade away jump shots, and alley-oops.

‘‘NBA Basketball 2000" also features in-depth stats, ratings and player profiles, as well as adjustable strategies depending on your preference

as player, coach or GM.

FOX Sports Net’s innovative broadcast graphics, proprietary camera angles and play-by-play commentary from FOX Sports Net Southwest broadcasters Greg Papa and Doc Rivers (now head coach of the NBA’s Orlando Magic) intensify the realistic gaming experience that attitude gamers have come to expect from FOX Sports Interactive. The game also features multiple difficulty levels and support for up to 10 players.

Eidos to Publish Olympic Titles

Eidos plc, one of the world’s leading developers and publishers of entertainment software, has signed an exclusive six year agreement with International Sports Multimedia (‘‘ISM") to publish forthcoming computer and video games based on a license from the International Olympic Committee (‘‘IOC").

The agreement covers the Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004 Olympic Games and the Salt Lake City 2002 Olympic Winter Games.

The Sydney 2000 product is being developed by Attention to Detail (‘‘ATD") based in Warwick, England. Sydney 2000 is currently being designed for PC and PlayStation formats, with other platforms a possibility.

‘‘We are absolutely delighted to be publishing games based on what is undoubtedly the biggest event in the world-wide sports calendar, the Olympic Games", says Mike McGarvey, COO of Eidos. ‘‘The Millennium Games will be something special with the eyes of the whole world focused on Sydney. We will be publishing a top quality game that will let people the world over feel they are able to participate in the excitement."

Raymond Goldsmith of ISM says: ‘‘Following the recent very successful launch of the UEFA Champions League game, we are very pleased to extend our business relationship with Eidos to cover the Olympics, one of the few sports licenses that has true world-wide appeal".

Acclaim Sports’ WWF Attitude for PlayStation Ships August 5

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. Wednesday announced that WWF Attitude for the PlayStation has been completed and approved for manufacturing by Sony.

The game, which was developed by Acclaim Studios Salt Lake City is scheduled to ship to retailers nationwide on August 5.

‘‘WWF Attitude is the most highly anticipated game of the summer," said Paul Eibeler, Executive Vice-President and General Manager, Acclaim North America. ‘‘We wanted to give the team all the time they needed to make Attitude the greatest wrestling video game ever. Their efforts were worth it, the game will not disappoint those who have eagerly awaited its release."

WWF Attitude is the smash sequel to the 1998, million-plus selling, WWF Warzone. The game features over 40 WWF Superstars including Stone Cold Steve Austin, The Rock, The Undertaker, and Mankind. Attitude also features

Create-A-Pay-Per-View Mode, over 20 game modes including all new specialty matches, new match options, career mode, photo-realistic wrestlers, create-a-wrestler, and over 400 moves including signature and finishing moves. Demand for WWF Attitude has reached unprecedented levels with retail pre-orders topping 100,000 units.

Electronic Arts Ships NCAA Football 2000 for the PlayStation

NCAA Football 2000 is the latest version of EA SPORTS' best-selling interactive college football game. It continues to raise the bar for college football gaming by delivering the deepest features, gameplay and graphics available.

NCAA Football 2000's delivers the best college program in the market, with a new graphic display engine and improved physics model allow for unparalleled player detail and fluid gameplay. College football fans will appreciate the detailed uniforms and the variably sized players that reflect both in size and agility for the position they play on the field. Improved load times and frame rate put gamers right in the action so they can enjoy the smooth detailed graphic presentation running the ball as Nebraska or watching Florida State receivers gain big yardage via the passing game.

Gamers may test NCAA Football 2000's improved graphic and game engines with any of the 220 teams, which include 140 division 1-A and 1-AA teams and 80 classic match up teams. Create-A-School allows gameplayers to create a program from the ground up and includes choice of mascot, fight songs, helmet color, enrollment, school name and much more.

''NCAA Football 2000 offers all types of gamers a way to play for the Championship," said John Schappert, executive in charge of production, Electronic Arts. ''Whether it's in a single quick game with a favorite team, trying to build up a program over several seasons in Dynasty Mode, or making a run at individual honors like the Heisman Trophy, NCAA Football 2000 delivers the depth and quality of gameplay sports gamers love."

NCAA Football 2000 offers many new and enhanced features to drive your team to the National Championship. EA SPORTS trademarked Dynasty Mode has been refined to give the gamer even more control over recruiting of individual players. Specific coaching staff visits and feedback on the recruited players allows for greater control over the quality and types of players sought. Players may be recruited for any of the 220 teams including the new conferences -- MEAC, SWAC and IVY LEAGUE -- or for a university created in the Create-A-School mode.

The expanded playbook now offers more than 1,100 plays designed in conjunction with The Coach's Edgefi software. The Coach's Edge is a software tool used by professional and amateur coaches to design and present plays to their respective teams. EA Coaching Tips, provided by the Coach's Edge, pop-up during the game with quick tips and lessons on college football. This feature is user selectable and can be turned off by more advanced players.

Coming to a campus this fall will be the NCAA Football 2000 Video Game Championships. EA SPORTS will support a 64 campus tour that will include tournaments on campus, regional tournament championships and a chance to

play for the coveted interactive national championship at a Bowl game this winter. For more details please visit www.easports.com.

NCAA Football 2000 includes all 20 Bowl Games including exclusive rights to the Nokia Sugar Bowl, the Fed Ex Orange Bowl and the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl, providing real life bowl competition not found in any other interactive college football game. Also, with the 2000 Nokia Sugar Bowl being the final stop to determine the Football National Champion, NCAA Football 2000 will be the only college football video game in which fans can play a full season in the quest for the coveted national title.

NCAA Football 2000 for the PlayStation supports Analog Control delivering force feedback on all the hard-hitting football action. The suggested retail price is (U.S.) $39.95.

Majesco Launches New Publishing Arm Pipe Dream Interactive

Majesco, Inc. Tuesday announced the launch of Pipe Dream Interactive Inc., Majesco's new interactive entertainment publishing division. Pipe Dream will publish original and licensed games for the Sega Dreamcast, Game Boy Color and other game consoles. Pipe Dream is currently working on several titles that will be distributed by Majesco Sales, including its first release for the launch of Sega's Dreamcast system in September.

''Pipe Dream's mission is to use its top-notch development teams to create original properties and bring life to licensed properties through art, imagination and intriguing stories," said Morris Sutton, chairman of Majesco Inc., and Pipe Dream. ''We are excited to use our success on the distribution side of the interactive entertainment business as the foundation for a publishing arm that brings gamers the types of games and titles they want, starting with our first release for Dreamcast."

Pipe Dream Interactive is based out of the Majesco offices in Edison, New Jersey. Morris Sutton and Jesse Sutton, chairman and president of Majesco respectively, hold the same positions for Pipe Dream Interactive.

Pipe Dream's current development efforts are led by industry veterans Dan Kitchen and Kevin Mitchell at Morningstar Multimedia, developers of such titles as Kristi Yamaguchi Fantasy Ice Skating, Wing Commander II, Ascendancy and Privateer II. Their development credits range as far back as Return of the Jedi for the Atari 5200 and The Simpsons: Bart vs. The World for the Nintendo Entertainment System.

Nintendo Forms Strategic Next Generation Console Relationships to Make Game Development Easier, Faster

Designed to enable early and easy development of games that tap the full potential of its next generation console system, Nintendo of America Inc. today announced strategic relationships with three U.S.-based, leading software and hardware tools companies for its upcoming system, code named ''Dolphin."

Nintendo has entered into long term agreements with three of the industry's top development tools companies: Applied Microsystems, Corp., Metrowerks,

and Factor 5.

These relationships are part of an on-going process to identify optimal tools partners for a console more powerful than any current or planned home video game system and offering players a dramatically enhanced visual and engaging gameplay experience. All of the relationships announced will extend through the life of Nintendo’s new system.

‘‘These tools will allow our developers and third-party licensees to make the most of the tremendous power of the Dolphin system," says Jim Merrick, Director of Technical Support at Nintendo of America. ‘‘Providing developers quality tools from top companies at this early stage means better quality games, faster game creation, and faster time-to-market, which is great for everyone, especially the consumer."

Nintendo’s next generation Dolphin home video game console will feature a unique 400 MHz central processor from IBM, a custom designed 200 MHz graphics chip from ArtX and a proprietary DVD drive from Matsushita. The 400 MHz copper ‘‘Gekko" processor will power Nintendo’s new system using IBM’s industry-leading 0.18 micron copper technology. The new system is slated to be available worldwide for the 2000 holiday season, as recently announced at the E3 Expo in Los Angeles.

Applied Microsystems, Corp. (AMC), based in Redmond, WA, has been selected to design and manufacture the critical development hardware developers will use to create Dolphin games. AMC is a recognized leader in manufacturing development tools for embedded systems for the avionics, Internetworking, and telecommunications industries.

‘‘We’re pleased we were chosen to work with Nintendo on Dolphin," says Stephen J. Verleye, President and CEO, Applied Microsystems, Corp. ‘‘AMC has led the embedded systems tools market for more than 20 years, so we have much to offer this next generation of console."

Helping developers lead the way for the next generation of game design is Austin, Texas-based Metrowerks, the leading provider of software development tools for the PowerPC architecture of which the Gekko processor is an extension. Metrowerks will provide a custom version of its acclaimed CodeWarrior software development tools which will enable developers to create Dolphin game software using popular programming languages.

‘‘Our Dolphin-specific CodeWarrior will streamline the Dolphin game development process giving designers ease of use and the ability to access the unique features of the Dolphin system and the Gekko chip," explains Greg Galanos, President and Chief Technology Officer of Metrowerks. ‘‘We’re pleased to work with Nintendo on this important hardware system and look forward to the results of this partnership."

Game and tools developer Factor 5, based in San Rafael, CA, which garnered many accolades for the audio in Nintendo 64’s best-seller Star Wars: Rogue Squadron, will provide audio and music development tools for Dolphin developers. Factor 5’s MusyX Audio Tools product is highly efficient and offers the most advanced sound creation methods ever devised for interactive media. Factor 5’s MusyX(tm) Audio Tools also feature an approved Dolby(Note A) Surround sound real-time encoder, adding the most advanced 3D audio to Nintendo games when played with a Dolby Surround decoder.

‘‘Nintendo is the first game console manufacturer to recognize the evolution of sound as an integral part of their next generation system,"

says Julian Eggebrecht, president, Factor 5, LLC. ‘‘Their system will be more powerful than anything else out there, and we’re thrilled to work with them."

Nintendo also has made both the tool sets from Factor 5 and Metrowerks available for N64 and Game Boy Color games. Via these next generation relationships, Nintendo maintains a high level of continuity for its hardware systems. Developers also will have instant familiarity with the tools that can help them make great strides in creating games for the Dolphin system.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!
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AtariNews: On The Prowl
07/22/99

LATEST HEADLINES:

SONGBIRD PRODUCTIONS ANNOUNCES MANY JAGUAR AND LYNX GAMES

Songbird Productions, currently developing Protector, a Defender style game, for the Jaguar has announced new Jaguar and Lynx games. For the Jaguar, Songbird Productions has acquired the rights to three finished games. The games announced are: Soccer Kid, a platform developed by Krisalis Software Ltd. that has been on the 3DO for some time now. Hyper Force, another platform only available on the Jaguar by Visual Impact. And finally, one of the more anticipated Jaguar games, Skyhammer by Rebellion.

For the Lynx, Songbird has two new Lynx games, both to be released at the Classic Gaming Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, on August 14-15. The first game is Lexis, a Tetris style game, where you must complete words instead of lines. The second game is a joint effort between Songbird, Serious Cybernetics, and the developer of the Crystal Mines series, Ken Beckett, to bring us Crystal Mines II: Buried Treasure. This includes Windows software and a serial to comlynx cable and takes advantage of and already existing feature in CM2 on the Lynx to download your own levels.

http://songbird.atari.org

PONX FOR THE LYNX IS NOW AVAILABLE

Songbird Productions released Ponx for the Lynx at JagFest ’99. Ponx is a clone of the first Atari game, Pong. In this game, however, you can adjust the color, the number of balls, and the difficulty level of the Lynx controlled opponent. You can also play two player on the same Lynx. Ponx can be ordered from the Songbird Productions homepage for $39.95

http://songbird.atari.org

JAGFEST: THE MOVIE

Want to see what happened at JagFest ’99, or relive the memories of the event? Then order the JagFest video. This hobbyist video includes live footage from JagFest ’99, Interviews with well-known Atari Fans who attended the fest, and direct feeds from upcoming, rare, and unreleased Jaguar and 2600 VCS games. The video is $19.95 plus shipping.

http://jagfest.atari.org

CLASSIC GAMER MAGAZINE ONLINE FEATURES SCREENSHOTS OF UPCOMING REMAKES

Classic Gamer has exclusive news and screenshots of many upcoming remakes of classic Atari and other classic games. The games include Missile Command, Pong, Q*Bert, and Space Invaders.

http://www.classicgamer.com

ATARI ARCADE HITS RELEASED

Atari celebrates it’s 27th anniversary with the release of Atari Arcade Hits Volume 1. One of Atari’s first releases as a separate division of Hasbro Interactive, this CD-ROM includes Arcade Perfect versions of Asteroids, Centipede, Missile Command, Tempest, Super Breakout and Pong. Also included is interviews with Nolan Bushnell and other interesting information. This is the first in a three part series, and has a list price of $29.95.

http://www.atari.com

HYPERDROME IS COMING

Although it hasn’t been announced on the Telegames home page, Telegames will be releasing Hyperdrome onto the Atari Lynx later this year. AtariNews has learned that Hyperdrome should be published in time for Classic Gaming Expo ’99. We will have more information as it is released about this anticipated Lynx game.

http://www.telegames.com

Send any comments or submissions for "AtariNews: On The Prowl" to: Brian Gudzevich (Editor) at: Atarian@netzero.net

Sponsoring web sites:

-The Atarian Atmosphere: http://atmosphere.atari.org
-The Jaguar’s Domain: http://jagdomain.atari.org

[Editor’s note: Were the organizers of the upcoming CG Expo actually snookered? The original story was that Nolan Bushnell backed out of the show due to "questionable actions" on the part of the organizers. After reading some messages on Usenet from Bushnell’s agent, Loni Reeder, I find myself questioning the alleged events leading up to Bushnell’s withdrawal. There’s more to this story than has been told, as you may see

in the Usenet ’conversation’ below.]

Subject:
To: Jerry
Fm: Loni
Re: CGE99
Date: 1999/07/16
Author: LONBO <lonbo@aol.com>

Jerry Jessop wrote:

<<The first part is a prior reply from John Hardie of CGExpo.

"I know we’re really looking forward to Nolan and Ralph Baer squaring off at the show. I know Jerry Jessop will be oiling up his machine to get it ready for the big match-up."

(Loni responds below)

"First of all... Nolan never consented to a PONG match-up with Ralph Baer. The only thing he agreed to was a verbal debate with him as to the origins of the videogame industry."

Suddenly 2 weeks later his assistant (who was there) uses it as one of the excuses to pull out, I was dumbfounded to say the least.

****

Hi Jerry...

(fyi --- I’ve just recently discovered this newsgroup thing --- way cool! Hope I’m doing it right...)

Yes, I can completely understand your confusion and shock about the above, since we did all chat up the idea at the video shoot of Nolan and Ralph playing a round or two of PONG at CGE99 (which would have been incredibly cool!!!).

But what I guess you didn’t know (and what I guess the organizers neglected to tell you) was that at the end of the video shoot, I asked Keita to send me the PONG competition idea and a scheduled time for it to be held via a "written proposal" --- since Nolan leaves all details to me to follow up on.

You see, our original agreement with the CGE99 staff last winter stipulated that EVERYTHING they wanted Nolan to participate in was to be agreed upon "in writing" with specifics, and not just on verbals. Given Nolan’s pressing time commitments, our insane work schedules, along with trying to keep straight everything he does for whomever and when --- we have made it standard practice to handle everything (not just CGE’s gig, but everything!) "in writing" so that nothing is left to speculation or misinterpretation. It’s just good business to handle things this way (especially since we had, at that point in time, tentative meetings scheduled in Vegas during that weekend and that the potential for scheduling conflicts were becoming even greater). But I’m not telling you anything you don’t already know first hand about documenting things ---

Sony is a successful company because of great products and an efficient paper trail system.

To assume that just because Nolan was in town for the whole weekend that he would be available for whatever/whenever was not a good assumption for them to make, if in fact that is what they were doing. It would be horrible for the fans (not to mention embarrassing for everyone involved!!!) if he wasn't available for events that people were promised he would attend --- events that were not on his calendar.

Anyway, we never received a written proposal, date or time --- yet come to find out, CGE was in the process of promoting the event anyway. I guess they just 'assumed' that it would happen because we had chatted about it. And they had weeks to get something to us in writing after the shoot.

So perhaps this has shed some light on this one particular situation for you (since you mentioned it on the newsgroup message area) --- but it was not the primary reason for Nolan's withdrawal.

Actually, we have gone to great lengths to maintain silence about the incidents in question which led up to Nolan's withdrawal in an attempt to allow CGE to continue on with some amount of dignity (which for me personally has required super-human restraint as of late, given the horrible things that have been said and inferred about my business partner and friend with regard to his withdrawal).

CGE's dignity at the expense of Nolan's reputation --- doesn't seem like a fair trade, does it?

For whatever reason, the CGE staff was unwilling to own up to mistakes, to take responsibility, to try to right some of the wrongs, or to even apologize to Nolan (which might have helped in making some headway in bringing him back to the event). Nolan deserved that and more, given some of the things that took place.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

AOL Blocks Microsoft Messages

America Online Inc. responded to the release oinstant messaging software from Microsoft Inc. by electronically jamming messages that users of the Microsoft software tried to send to people who use AOL's service.

Microsoft's MSN Messenger Service, released Thursday, works through the Microsoft Network site, allowing instant message exchanges with the 40 million users of MSN Hotmail.

Instant messengers allow Internet users to chat in ''real time" by sending messages that recipients see instantly, without having to go through

e-mail. While common enough on the Web, few messenger programs are compatible with others.

The Microsoft program was designed to allow messages to be sent to users of the popular AOL Instant Messenger System, or AIM. That aspect of the new software angered AOL, which late Thursday blocked MSN users from interacting with AIM users, The New York Times reported today.

Seattle-based Microsoft said it had revised its program late Friday to get around the AOL block. But Dulles, Va.-based AOL responded within hours by issuing a second block, the Times said. The story also was reported today by The Washington Post.

To determine which AOL users are online, Microsoft’s product enters AOL’s servers in a way that the company says violates its copyrights and trademarks.

Among AOL’s complaints is that Microsoft requires AOL users to enter their password, AOL spokeswoman Ann Brackbill said Thursday.

‘‘It raises significant and serious privacy and security issues," Brackbill said. ‘‘Its unauthorized access to the AOL namespace is akin to hacking."

Analysts say the new software as a key step in the ever-escalating battle among Internet companies to obtain Web traffic to help them sell advertisements.

By designing its messaging service to work with AOL’s system, Microsoft Network could position itself to draw more users to its Web site and keep them there longer, said Emily Meehan, an analyst with The Yankee Group research firm of Boston.

Deanna Sanford, MSN lead product manager, said Messenger was just one of the services MSN wanted to offer its users and wasn’t directed towards competing with AOL.

‘‘This is just part of our continuing efforts to provide consumers with a place they can go to get information no matter where they are," she said.

Instant Messaging Battle Heats Up

With instant messaging on the Web becoming a cultural mainstay like e-mail, Microsoft’s battle against America Online’s dominance of a new community could turn as nasty as the browser wars between Microsoft and Netscape.

But this time Microsoft has major allies like Yahoo! who want to make sure members of their online communities can ‘‘flash" a note to any of the 80 million users of AOL’s instant messaging services.

The battle flared up last week when Microsoft launched a service similar to AOL’s Instant Messenger, allowing users of its MSN network to zap messages to AOL subscribers.

AOL, angered by what it considered trespassing in its private online community, promptly retaliated with an electronic blockade against instant messages from the original MSN service - and subsequent versions designed

to outflank AOL’s defenses.

Microsoft argues that instant messages, like e-mail, should flow freely between online services for all to use, and that AOL’s attitude violates the spirit of the Internet.

‘‘Imagine a world where we couldn’t talk by telephone if we had different" phone companies, said Deanna Sanford, lead product manager for MSN marketing.

Sanford said her company will continue to post new versions of its software to elude AOL’s defenses. A new version was posted early Monday.

Later in the day, AOL chief executive Steve Case downplayed the standoff as a ‘‘squabble" that could be resolved through talks, ‘‘not by Microsoft hacking into our network."

The jousting, analysts said, is as much about bragging rights as dollars, because little revenue is generated directly from instant messaging.

Just as Microsoft wants to maintain its dominance of the operating software that runs most computers, AOL would like to control the messaging market.

‘‘This is essentially a political battle," said Simon Hayward, research director for Gartner Group in Stamford, Conn. ‘‘The issue is the way Microsoft went about doing this. AOL feels its turf has been stepped on."

Instant messaging initially caught on as a gossip tool at home and at the office, but has become a popular way to send comments more quickly and with even less formality than e-mail.

Still, because the notes have to be short, the business applications of instant messaging are limited.

Messaging services usually feature a ‘‘buddy list" that lets users know when friends or associates are logged onto the Internet. Messages appear in a box on a user’s screen.

While AOL’s instant messaging services, AIM and ICQ (short for ‘‘I seek you"), dominate the market, about 200,000 copies of Microsoft’s messaging software were downloaded the first day it appeared on the company’s Web site.

‘‘There will be more rounds back and forth," said Mark Levitt, research director with International Data Corp. in Framingham, Mass.

Analysts also said the fight could have a positive result if it speeds the way toward an industry standard. They noted that e-mail in its early days also was restricted.

Yahoo!, Prodigy Communications and others are also urging AOL to open up its instant messaging network.

AOL has said it favors the development of industry standards, but plans to block competitors until they are. An AOL official said Monday a letter has been sent to Microsoft asking to discuss the issue.

AOL officials also say they’re alarmed that MSN’s Messenger Service asks AOL users to enter their user name and password before they can connect, raising privacy questions.

‘‘We have it all over our screens: ‘Never give out your password,"’ spokeswoman Ann Brackbill said.

Apple, AOL Plan Messaging Products

The public tiff over instant messaging on the Internet escalated Thursday, with combatants America Online Inc. and Microsoft Corp. showing few signs of backing down.

America Online, the nation’s largest Internet service, enlisted Apple Computer Inc., maker of the popular iMac desktop, to help add more users to AOL’s Instant Messenger service, the hottest trend since e-mail exploded on the scene in the early 1990s. The two companies agreed Thursday to work together to let Macintosh users more easily zap messages to the 40 million users of AOL’s service.

While AOL already makes its instant messaging service for Apple’s computers, the agreement refers to future products such as pre-loaded AOL software on Mac machines. That would free Mac users from having to download software off the Internet.

The alliance came a day after Microsoft touted that more than 700,000 people already are using its own just-launched service. But AOL continues to try to electronically block messages from users of the MSN service, even as Microsoft attempts to circumvent those efforts.

The back-and-forth skirmishes add fuel to an Internet battle that flared last Wednesday when Microsoft, the world’s largest computer software maker, unmasked a service similar to AOL’s Instant Messenger, allowing users of its MSN network to instantly send messages to AOL subscribers.

AOL’s service previously hadn’t been compatible with other systems. But AOL said what really bothered it was that the MSN program asks AOL users for user names and passwords, raising privacy concerns. AOL has since retaliated with an electronic blockade against instant messages from the MSN service, which Microsoft is trying to work around.

By reaching an agreement with Apple, AOL wants to help its service continue to grow despite Microsoft’s foray.

‘‘This is a way to make sure that AOL stays on top of the competition here, and staves off any competitive threats that Microsoft may be throwing onto the table," said Emily Meehan, an analyst with The Yankee Group research firm, based in Boston.

A Microsoft official said the company plans to come out with a Mac version of its instant messaging service before the end of the year and that Thursday’s announcement would not change those plans. Microsoft argues that instant messages, like e-mail, should flow freely between online services for all to use, just like slower electronic mail.

‘‘This announcement is a smokescreen by AOL to divert attention from the real issue to create an industry standard and working together with the broad industry to really solve the problem for consumers," said Robert Bennett, group product manager for MSN Internet services.

But some say that contention sounds hypocritical, since Microsoft is battling a government antitrust lawsuit that accuses it of abusing its computer operating system dominance to shut out software rivals.

‘‘The weakness in that argument is that Microsoft hasn’t been particularly open about its software," said Mark Levitt, an analyst with the International Data Corp. research firm.

For its part, AOL says that it supports ‘‘intra-operability" between instant messaging systems, but not at the expense of its business. AOL claims that Microsoft has ‘‘hacked" into its network to figure out how to make its MSN messaging product compatible with AOL’s.

Ann Brackbill, an AOL spokeswoman, said the company had formed a group to reach out the industry to form standards for enabling different message systems to work with each other. The group includes AOL chief technology officer Marc Andreessen; Apple CEO Steve Jobs; Novell Inc. chief executive Eric Schmidt; and Rob Glaser, head of the RealNetworks Inc., which enables Internet users to receive video and audio broadcasts.

‘‘We hope that by getting a group together we can really jump-start those efforts," Brackbill said.

US Said To Seek Advice On Microsoft Breakup

A report that the Justice Department is seeking advice on how Microsoft Corp. might be carved into pieces revived speculation Thursday about the outcome of the landmark antitrust case against the software giant.

But industry analysts and antitrust specialists said they considered it highly unlikely that antitrust regulators would ask for such a solution even if Microsoft were found to have acted illegally in perpetuating a monopoly in computer operating systems.

‘‘I don’t think it’s likely they will seek it," said Mark Schechter, a Washington lawyer and former official in the Justice Department’s antitrust division. ‘‘It’s even less likely that a court would grant it and even less likely that a court of appeals would uphold it."

Justice Department spokeswoman Gina Talamona confirmed that the government has approached experts to assist it in considering its remedy options should it win.

But no individual or firm has been retained to analyze the market impact of any option, Talamona said. ‘‘We are not focused on any single remedy. All our options remain open."

USA Today reported the department has approached two leading investment banks that specialize in technology, for a detailed analysis of the best way to break up the Redmond, Wash.-based firm. Bankers at the firms, who were not identified, declined the request to identify which parts of the company could best be made separate and predict the reaction of financial markets, the newspaper said.

Microsoft spokesman Jim Cullinan declined to comment on any possible remedy, saying the company was focused on providing final documents to the court. ‘‘We believe when you look at the record, the government has failed

to prove its case," he said.

Microsoft shares lost $3.06 to close at $86.94 on Nasdaq as most technology issues were sharply lower.

The possibility of breaking up Microsoft was discussed even before the federal government and 19 states filed their antitrust suit last year, although regulators so far have stopped far short of asking for such a remedy.

Schechter noted that Microsoft is accused not of illegally obtaining its market-dominating position but only of acting improperly to maintain it, making it unlikely that a court would approve a so-called ‘‘structural remedy."

Antitrust experts said it was not surprising regulators were using the current period before final arguments in the trial to consider possible remedies, although other analysts said they thought the Justice Department might be merely trying to stir moribund settlement discussions.

‘‘This is so premature," said analyst Bill Epifanio of J.P. Morgan. ‘‘Why are we talking about remedies when Microsoft is not even guilty yet?"

Unlike other companies that have been broken up in antitrust actions like Standard Oil and AT&T Corp., Microsoft presents no obvious lines of breakup.

The most frequently mentioned possibility would carve the company into its main product groups -- operating systems, applications and interactive media. That would raise questions on how to allocate the company’s marketing, sales and research operations and ignores that fact that Microsoft’s core Office applications have not been implicated in the lawsuit.

A second solution, considered an even more remote possibility, would break the company into several ‘‘baby Bills" of roughly equivalent size and resources.

The evidence portion of the Microsoft trial ended June 24 after eight months of witness testimony introducing mountains of e-mails and other documents. U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson is not expected to issue his finding of fact until September or October at the earliest.

After that, Jackson would issue conclusions of law and determine what remedies are needed to correct any violations.

Many experts have said they expect Jackson to side with the government, but Microsoft almost certainly will appeal, a process that could reach the Supreme Court and tie up the case for years.

Microsoft Breakup Talk Called ’Premature’

Published reports that the Department of Justice has "set sights" on a Microsoft Corp. "bust-up" are premature, according to the department.

USA Today reported Thursday morning that the DOJ had sought advice from at least two investment banks about the ramifications of a Microsoft breakup.

DOJ spokeswoman Gina Talimona was quoted as saying the DOJ had "made preliminary inquiries to experts that might assist us in evaluating an array of remedy options."

Talimona told PC Week that the statement is correct, but added that "the discussion of possible remedies is premature. All options are open. We have not focused on any one remedy."

According to USA Today, bankers at the two firms, who requested anonymity, said DOJ officials wanted an assessment of where the logical breakup points of Microsoft were and a valuation of what the market reaction would be. Both firms declined, the paper says, because they were concerned about the impact of siding with a department viewed in the business community as interventionist.

Sources close to the landmark antitrust case indicated the report was overblown and that such inquiries were probably standard operating procedure for a case of this magnitude, not necessarily a sign that divvying up the software giant would be the preferred penalty Justice will seek.

In other DOJ-Microsoft news, Talimona said oral closing arguments in the case will begin on September 21, starting at 10 a.m. At the close of the witness phase of the trial last month, both sides were unsure if District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson would request oral arguments or whether he would prefer to simply have both sides submit written closing arguments with their findings of fact.

The findings of fact are to be submitted to Jackson on August 10.

Testimony in the trial concluded last month, eight months after the proceedings began. Jackson is not expected to rule on the case until November.

What’s Ahead For Apple?

With the wave of a hula hoop at last week’s Macworld Expo, Steve Jobs answered the last question about Apple Computer Inc.’s product line and raised a new one: What comes next?

Jobs used the hula hoop to introduce the company’s iBook consumer portable, running it through the hoop to show that it was indeed wirelessly connected to the Internet. With the iBook, Jobs, Apple’s seemingly permanent interim CEO, jumped through a daunting business hoop of his own. He needed one year to create products in four quadrants (professional and consumer desktops and portables) and just two years to make Apple a comeback king, a feat perhaps unduplicated in tech history.

Now the question becomes: how does the company sustain its momentum?

The question makes Phil Schiller, Apple’s head of product marketing, roll his eyes. "Can’t you guys give us break?" he said. "We haven’t even started to ship the iBook and now everyone wants to know what’s happening after that."

Not that Apple doesn’t have a plan for sustaining momentum, Schiller continued. He ran down a laundry list of plans for the coming year:

Releasing the iBook in time for the school season, shipping OS 9 this year and OSX Consumer after that -- plus a new line of G4-powered computers, due early next year.

Tim Bajarin, president of Campbell, Calif.-based Creative Strategies Inc., says that "the fact that he's filled the quadrants doesn't mean he can't keep innovating in those quadrants. There's lots of stuff he can still do."

But most importantly, Schiller said, the company's future depends upon avoiding the mistakes that got it into trouble the first time around.

"We can't be arrogant again," Schiller said. "We need to keep setting high goals. We have to keep the pedal to the metal."

Apple's rise in the late '80s was thwarted in part by the company's complacency and loss of focus. But Jobs, master of suspense and surprise, seems determined not to let that happen again.

Though Apple executives remain mum on plans for additional classes of computers, company watchers fully expect handhelds to be among Apple's future offerings.

"What's next for Apple? One space is the handheld," said Jimmy Duvall, a marketing manager at Lotus Development Corp., who was showing off his company's new Notes 5 for the Mac. "Is that the next thing for Apple? I think it's logical."

Bajarin also believes the handheld holds appeal for Apple, especially after seeing the crowds that flocked to 3Com Corp.'s Palm booth at Macworld.

"I'm looking for what I call the 'pocket Mac,'" Bajarin said. "Steve has to realize these PDAs have gone past the novelty phase."

Bajarin said Apple has to decide whether to build its own device from scratch or license from another company.

And it would make sense. The company christened the handheld market in the early 90s with the Newton, a portable computer featuring then cutting-edge technology such as infrared. Apple ditched the Newton two years ago, with Jobs criticizing the strategy behind it, but Jobs later offered to buy Palm -- an indication of his continued interest in handhelds. He was rebuffed.

Others would like to see Apple push beyond its core markets of publishing, consumers and schools, and into the corporate world. After all, why should those groups get the frisky new iMacs and PowerMacs while corporate America is stuck with boring gray boxes?

That's a question Macworld attendee and tech support worker Keith Cooper had for the company.

"Apple needs to evolve with the technology, get into other markets," Cooper said. "It needs to attract more business software. That's the need I've seen."

A move into the business market could be a big chunk of change for Apple because most computers sold today are sold to corporations. But as recently as two years ago, Apple was reeling from an unwieldy corporate product line -- which Jobs cut as he returned focus to Apple's core markets.

Other people would simply like to see lower prices. Apple's troubles a few

years ago stemmed in part from its determination to keep prices high while competing PCs became less expensive.

It’s an issue Apple still faces -- especially as PCs drop below $1,000, or even $500. Apple responds that its computers are simply worth more because they’re faster and easier to use. Plus, lowering prices would cut deeply into Apple’s bottom line, which has depended heavily on iMac sales since the machine’s debut last year.

But price is an issue in at least two of Apple’s markets: education and consumers. While Apple is racing to get the iBook out before school starts, Ryan Cuprak, a 20-year old university student who attended Macworld, said he just bought an iMac and therefore can’t afford a portable just yet. "I’ll wait a while," he said. "I’m still purchasing stuff for the iMac."

And it’s unclear exactly who will buy the iBook, if some iMac users don’t plan to. Though one-third of the iMac users are brand new computer buyers, Apple is unlikely to repeat that statistic with the iBook. After all, the market for portables geared strictly toward consumers and schools doesn’t exist. But then again, that’s how Apple did things in the early days, when it struck out into areas no one else had thought to pursue. Back when Jobs started the firm, there was no PC market.

IBM Falls Hard For Linux

Among the major server vendors, IBM is emerging with a clear story of end-to-end support for Linux that can’t help but give the operating system a boost in the eyes of corporate information technology managers.

Tomorrow, July 27, IBM is expected to announce it will support Linux on its Intel-based Netfinity line of servers, offering certification to distributors that Red Hat, Caldera, SuSE and TurboLinux run on its servers. In addition it will offer 90 days of free service and support for customers installing Linux on Netfinity hardware through its Personal Systems Group.

IBM has already announced it was offering contract support for Linux through its Global Services Unit. It will finish moving its DB2 relational database system to Linux at the end of July and will make the Lotus Notes Domino Web server available under Linux by year’s end. With software and services in place, the last piece of the IBM’s Linux strategy was hardware support.

"IBM is doing more than the other major vendors. It’s shown a lot of nimbleness at picking up on hot new technologies," said John Ousterhout, chief executive officer of Scriptics, the company behind the open source code Tcl scripting language.

The only hardware vendor that has moved to back the open source code operating system similar to IBM has been SGI (formerly Silicon Graphics Inc., which is a sponsor of the Samba project for file exchange between Linux and Windows NT, and contributor of its Irix’ sophisticated journaling file system.

But IBM’s recent efforts still dwarf those moves. And the company is far from done.

John Prial, director of Linux marketing at IBM, said the company plans to

move a broad suite of middleware software and specialized capabilities to the Linux platform. For example, both IBM’s message-oriented middleware, MQ Series, for connecting one application with another, and its ViaVoice software for issuing voice commands to a computer or giving it voice word processing dictation will be moved to Linux by the end of the year.

IBM also is believed to be bringing its clustering expertise to bear on Linux in a lab project set up last May with TurboLinux.

In addition, IBM is addressing advanced storage for Linux by creating a driver for its Netfinity 5500 RAID array or redundant array of inexpensive disks, which it will donate to Linux’ open source code pool, said Tom Figgatt, e-business executive for the Netfinity unit.

Microsoft Releases Test Version Of Windows Upgrade

Software giant Microsoft Corp. is moving ahead with plans for a consumer-oriented upgrade of its flagship Windows operating system scheduled for release sometime next year.

Computer hardware makers and software developers will get their first peek at the system, code-named Millennium, when the software behemoth releases an early test version of the product Monday, said Shawn Sanford, a Microsoft group product manager.

‘‘Millennium is going to be a very significant release for home users," Sanford said.

So far few details have emerged about the new system, a follow-on to the Windows 95/98 system that was mentioned only in passing at the company’s annual meeting with financial analysts last week.

Sanford said it was too early to say what features will be included in the operating system update or whether the user interface will be any different from Windows 98, the current consumer standard. The first ‘‘pre-beta" test version being shipped Monday is mainly for technical evaluation purposes.

Sanford said Microsoft is focusing on building technology into the operating system that will improve consumers’ Internet experience, make it easier to set up a home network and support higher quality music and images.

‘‘We’re really working toward simplifying the computing experience for home users," Sanford said.

But one analyst said Microsoft might be confusing some users with its growing array of Windows options.

‘‘They’ve got a nightmare to deal with just in terms of naming it," said Rob Enderle of Giga Information Group.

The Windows 2000 name is reserved for the next version of Microsoft’s costlier business-oriented operating system, due out by the end of 1999.

A separate consumer operating system based on the NT "kernel" at the heart of Windows 2000 is scheduled to be released sometime in the future, and Enderle said some Microsoft executives would like to see that product

released as soon as next year.

In any case, the ‘‘Millennium" update will be needed next year because of an unusual number of changes in the basic computing platform including a new microprocessor, memory architecture and class of monitors, Enderle said.

‘‘They’ve got to rotate it fast because we are going through one of the most significant hardware changes we’ve had in a long time," Enderle said.

Like Windows 98, the Millennium product is likely to quickly become the standard for new personal computers but probably will have little appeal to most consumers as a retail upgrade -- despite a huge installed base with more than 150 million computers running Windows 95 or Windows 98.

Microsoft did not release pricing details, but similar past Windows upgrades have sold at retail for about $90.

Compaq Sues eMachines Over Patents

Compaq Computer Corp. sued eMachines, a rival maker of inexpensive personal computers, and its parent companies on Monday for allegedly infringing on 13 patents protecting Compaq’s PC technology.

The disputed Compaq patents cover computer screen displays to keyboards to the PC’s internal circuitry.

The lawsuit tries to get eMachines to stop selling PCs that allegedly infringe on Compaq’s patents as well as seeks unspecified damages.

Compaq filed suit against eMachines and its Korean parent companies, Trigem Computer and Korea Data Systems, in federal court in Houston, where Compaq is based.

A spokeswoman for eMachines, based in Irvine, Calif., had no immediate comment.

The lawsuit escalated the intense rivalry between Compaq, the No. 1 maker of PCs, and eMachines, a startup seller of $400 PCs that has vaulted to No. 5 among PCs sold at retail in May, according to the research firm PC Data. Compaq’s least expensive PC costs $600, without rebates.

Compaq insisted through a spokesman that its lawsuit was not just a strategic tactic in the computer wars. ‘‘We think competition’s a good thing," Compaq spokesman Alan Hodel said, ‘‘but not when a competitor improperly uses another companies’ technology."

Compaq Posts Q2 Loss, Will Cut Up To 8,OOO Jobs

Compaq Computer Corp., battered by a brutal PC price war, said Wednesday it lost $184 million in the second quarter and announced a massive restructuring that would include cuts of up to 8,000 jobs.

The loss, equivalent to 10 cents a share, was a penny less than the 11

cents a share analysts had expected, but the world’s largest personal computer maker warned it would take a charge against third quarter earnings of $700 million to $900 million for the sweeping job cuts. The restructuring, which includes unspecified plant closings, was bitter, but necessary medicine for the troubled computer group, which has been losing market share to fast- growing, Texas-based rival Dell Computer Corp.

Compaq’s stock, which closed up slightly to $26 on the New York Stock Exchange Wednesday, was unchanged in after-hours trading following the announcement.

‘‘We are aggressively taking the appropriate actions to restore the company’s growth and financial performance," said Michael Capellas, who was named last week as chief executive officer to turn the company around. ‘‘The realignment of the company is fully underway."

The job cuts -- which could be as much as 12 percent of the company’s current workforce -- would ‘‘have a positive effect on both gross margin and operating expenses going forward," Capellas said.

Compaq was not the only company reporting massive head count reductions Wednesday. Electronic Data Services, the world’s no. 2 computer services firm, said it was offering early retirement to 8,000 employees in a bid to cut costs.

Compaq, which fired longtime Chief Executive Eckhard Pfeiffer in April and warned in June that a major restructuring was coming, blamed its poor showing on pricing pressures, no revenue growth and a ‘‘non-competitive cost structure."

The latest results compared with a year-ago net loss of $3.6 billion, or $2.33 a share, after charges for its acquisition of Digital Equipment Corp.

Total gross margin slipped to 20.5 percent in the quarter, down from 24.7 percent in the first quarter. Operating expenses rose to $2.2 billion, up from $1.9 billion in the first three months of the year.

The company said it had revenues of $9.4 billion for the quarter, which matched the total for the first quarter when it posted earnings of $281 million, or 16 cents a share.

Capellas, who joined Compaq last August and served as acting chief operating officer until his promotion last week, faces the formidable task for reshaping a company that has traditionally sold most of its computers through middlemen, while its strongest competitors sell directly to customers.

In figures released this week, Compaq continues to be the world’s dominant computer makers with 13.8 percent of the global market, but was nearly overtaken in the U.S. market by Dell, the top supplier of direct-from-the-factory, custom-made PCs.

According to research firm Dataquest, Compaq shipped 16.8 percent of the PCs sold in the United States in the second quarter, versus 16.4 percent for Dell.

Capellas said last week that Compaq would continue to sell through resellers, but would also beef up direct sales, which have better margins and require less inventory.

He said Compaq currently sells 15 percent of its computers directly, but would be at 25 percent by year’s end and hoped to eventually achieve 40 percent.

‘‘We have an aggressive schedule for meeting our realignment goals and reducing our cost structure," he said Wednesday.

New Software Lets You ’Beam’ Money

Sipping coffee at Buck’s Restaurant early Friday, a venture capitalist beamed a $3 million investment through his Palm organizer to the happy, startup CEO sitting nearby.

Patrons munching their poached eggs and hash browns couldn’t actually see the flurry of money flying through the air, but that’s virtually what happened.

Within seconds, the words: ‘‘Would you like to accept the money?" popped up on Confinity CEO Peter A. Thiel’s Palm organizer. He quickly tapped ‘‘Yes."

‘‘Of course that’s an understatement," said Thiel. ‘‘It should say, ’Yes, yes!"’

Thus came the official launch of PayPal, an instant payment service that allows people to exchange money through their Palm organizers.

Here’s how it works: registered users type the amount they want to pay another person into their device. They tap a ‘‘Pay" button, and then point their device at the recipients’ Palm organizer.

The information is sent via infrared beam, the same way a remote control sends messages to a television. The recipient later synchronizes his device at a personal computer, directing PayPal to either deposit the money directly into their bank account, send them a check, or just keep it in an account so they can pay someone else next time.

Thiel, who successfully pocketed his $3 million through his PayPal on Friday, said he expects most users to be between 20 and 35 years old, transferring much smaller amounts.

The software, which is downloaded free from the Internet, is expected to be ready for widespread use this fall. In the coming years, plans are to have the system work with cellular phones and pagers as well.

Like many startup high tech companies in the Silicon Valley, Confinity is focusing first on attracting users - they’re hoping for about 100,000 next year - before worrying about how to make it profitable.

In the meantime, they do plan to skim some ‘‘float cash" off the interest on accounts from PayPal users while their money waits to be beamed away. A similar system is used by travelers check companies, that profit off interest from money waiting in customer accounts between the time when checks are purchased and cashed.

Thiel, a Stanford graduate and a former securities lawyer, worked as a high tech investor before launching his 12-employee company last year. With his

Chief Technology Officer Max Levchin, who founded NetMeridian Software, and backed by hand-held encryption pioneer Dan Boneh, a computer science professor at Stanford University, Thiel said they are confident their system is ‘‘safer and easier than cash, credit cards or checks."

Rob Sterling, an analyst for Jupiter Communications in New York, said he thinks plenty of the 4 million Palm organizer users will add PayPal to their device.

‘‘If two people go out for dinner and decide to the split the tab, one person points their palm device at the other persons palm device and it’s done. The money is passed," he said. ‘‘You’re basically enabling the person to transmit money, and I think there’s a niche for that."

Dell Unveils Cheaper Computer

Dell Computer Corp. is jumping into the online business, saying Tuesday it will provide Internet service with a PC priced under $1,000.

Officials at Dell, which is strongest in direct PC sales to businesses, said the new venture is part of Dell’s strategy of increasing sales to consumers by building direct relationships with customers.

‘‘Our consumer business continues to be the great untold story about Dell," said Paul Bell, senior vice-president and general manager of Dell’s home and small business group. ‘‘We’re very, very bullish about the consumer business."

The new online initiative features one year of Internet access with the purchase of a Dell Dimension desktop or Inspiron notebook PC. The Dimension PCs with 150 hours of monthly Dellnet service begin at $959 or $29 a month over four years.

The Web site, www.dellnet.com, includes a personalized start page created by Snap.com, free e-mail and discounts on non-Dell products and services. The Web site also offers programs to help customers develop personal Web pages through Homestead.com and the ability to create audiofiles and download music to a desktop.

Joseph Panettieri, executive editor of trade magazine Smart Reseller, said Dell’s new initiative mimics the trend of other PC makers offering free Internet service and Internet service providers, or ISPs, giving away computers.

Panettieri said the Dell approach is useful for consumers who don’t want to get locked into a multiyear deal with an Internet provider that could be outdated or out of business before the contract expires.

‘‘Dell is going to be in business in a year, it’s going to be in business in five years, it’s not going anywhere," he said. ‘‘In the ISP market, all bets are off of who’s going to be around in three or four years."

Panettieri said the new initiative also illustrates Dell’s attempt to take on Gateway, another direct PC seller, to claim more of the consumer base.

While Dellnet will be available only to buyers of certain PCs, Dell hopes eventually to make the Internet service available to the wider market.

AOL Users Hit By Unusual Hoax

A new hoax is making the rounds of AOL users, posing -- confusingly enough -- as a hoax warning.

The message, which seems to be sent by a concerned AOL user, describes a fake "America Online Year 2000 Update" called Y2KFIX.EXE. The fake message allegedly fools users into giving up information on their accounts and credit cards. But no such fake update exists.

"There is currently no virus that has the characteristics ascribed to Y2KFIX.EXE," wrote Motoaki Yamamura of Symantec, in a briefing on Symantec's AntiVirus Research Center. "It is a sham, meant only to panic new or inexperienced computer users."

Hoaxes thrive on the Internet like nowhere else, since it is so easy to pass along authentic-seeming messages without eliciting a closer examination. As outlined on the Department of Energy's "Internet Hoaxes" page, previous Internet frauds have involved everything from Blue Mountain Cards' greeting cards to a supposed tax on e-mail.

The Y2KFIX prank is especially perplexing because there are, in fact, many schemes designed to trick people into revealing their AOL passwords or other personal information.

"It sounds absolutely plausible," said AOL spokesman Rich D'Amato.

The "AOL Year 2000 Update" hoax e-mail even includes a copy of the scam message it is supposedly warning against. This begins, "Hello, I am Richard Brunner of the AOL TECH Team and we have recently finished work on this project which is the AOL Year 2000 Update."

This message is said to include an attachment called Y2KFIX.EXE, which, when executed, causes a fake AOL billing window to pop up, asking users for their names and credit card numbers, among other information.

"It looks very legit. It says your billing cycle was up and they need more info," the hoax e-mail warns.

AOL representatives say users can double-check the reality of scams at the service's "Neighborhood Watch" section.

"This is a rumor perpetuating a hoax pretending to be a virus," D'Amato commented. "Plato wouldn't even accept that as poetry."

The same trick e-mail also warms about a "flashing IM," or instant message, that will automatically steal your password unless you "sign off immediately." But AOL said that not only is the "flashing IM" a hoax, it isn't technically possible.

Net Firms Team On Parents' Guide

In a bid to create an online clearinghouse of advice on keeping kids safe

on the Internet, U.S. government officials have joined forces with some three dozen Internet firms and trade groups.

The much-hyped GetNetWise.org project, to be officially unveiled in a press conference later Thursday, was spearheaded by White House officials along with companies such as AT&T, Microsoft Corp., and America Online Inc. The idea first emerged during the White House 1997 Internet Online Summit: Focus on Children, and the project has been in the works since that time, GetNetWise.org organizers said.

The Web site comprises a list of online safety tips for parents, teenagers and young children; a listing of some 80 different online content-filtering software tools; a tip sheet for reporting incidents of online harassment; and a guide to content created especially for kids.

The site cost $1 million to produce, and much of the funding came from filtering software makers, organizers said, but they added that great pains were taken to include all available filtering programs in the guide.

"This will be the first time a resource is available with so much aggregated information and so much support from the Internet industry, Congress and the (Clinton) admininstration," Jerry Berman, president of the Internet Education Foundation and executive director of the Center for Democracy and Technology, said in a statement. The IEF is one of the non-profits that helped craft the new site.

Vice President Al Gore and Commerce Secretary William Daley are to participate in today’s press conference on the site’s launch.

Newspaper To Publish Online Only

Nine months after printing its first paper, The Orem Daily Journal has announced it will stop distributing a print edition and will publish exclusively online.

The newspaper planned to distribute its final print edition today and resume publication online Aug. 5, publisher Levor Oldham said Wednesday.

Oldham said some employees - particularly those involved in distribution - are being laid off.

Previously, only the newspaper’s classified advertisements have been available on the Internet, he said.

The Journal may be the first daily paper in the nation to move its publication exclusively online, said Larry Pryor, executive editor of Online Journalism Review and a journalism professor at the University of Southern California. ‘‘Weekly publications have moved online, but I am unaware of any dailies," he said.

Oldham said common sense drove the move. ‘‘Clearly, the future of newspapers is on the Web."

The Orem Daily Journal is one of three Utah County newspapers published by Springville-based Journal Publications, which also designs and markets software for newspapers. It began publishing 7,500 copies in late October, positioning itself as a competitor to The Daily Herald in Provo, which has

a circulation of about 33,000.

New Internet Provider Offers Users Free Shares

With free-subscription Internet service providers (ISP) cramming the British market, the newest-comer said Thursday it would go a step further, giving away shares in itself to lure users.

Themutual.net said 115,000 people had already registered via its Web site to sign up for its ISP, which was launched Thursday with a pledge to give away up to half its shares to subscribers.

It said people who wanted shares in the company without using it as their ISP, or gateway to the Internet, could sign up as members and receive a smaller share allocation.

Themutual.net said subscribers and members would enjoy unique content, such as up-to-the-minute share quotations from freequotes.co.uk.

Totalise Plc, another fledgling Internet group, announced a similar service Wednesday but said it would be giving away a majority stake in the company.

Taking a lead from U.S. peers, which have used stock giveaways to publicize products and win new users, Totalise said it would be the first UK Internet group to offer free, tradable shares when customers used its services for three months.

Other ISPs have plans to pay people according to the amount of time they spend online and, the companies hope, succumbing to the power of advertising on Web sites.

Themutual.net said it was not setting any minimum limit for the time a subscriber had to spend on line to qualify for a bigger share allocation than mere ‘‘users".

Britain’s first and biggest ‘‘free" ISP Freeserve Plc made a strong debut when it floated Monday. Its shares had risen by 50 percent from their offer price by 1330 GMT Thursday to 227-1/2 pence.

Freeserve triggered the rush of more than 100 no-subscription ISPs, where users pay only local telephone connection charges, last September when it was started by electronics retailer Dixons Plc.

Russia Destroys Mountain Of CDs In Piracy Fight

Russian authorities destroyed nearly half a million illegal computer CDs Tuesday in a rare public display of action against the rampant piracy of computer and music discs.

Yet even as a massive bulldozer crushed pirated copies of popular programs such as computer software giant Microsoft’s Windows 98, a Moscow outdoor market continued to offer pirated CDs for about $2.

‘‘Of course, this action does not mean that we can eliminate piracy in one

day," said Maria Pichakhchi, a Microsoft spokeswoman who watched officials crush and bury discs at a remote garbage dump about 60 km (37 miles) from central Moscow.

‘‘But it does show that discs seized by the police are indeed being destroyed."

Experts say about 90 percent of Russia’s software and music CDs, and about the same amount in video sales, are unauthorized. Despite years of promises from Russian officials, they appear to have made scant progress in fighting the problem.

Andrei Trofimov, deputy head of the Interior Ministry’s new division fighting high-tech crimes, said Tuesday’s action was evidence of a better-focused fight against piracy.

‘‘The approach is now different," he said. ‘‘We used to handle this through the department of economic crimes, which looked at not only fake computer software but also toothpaste and soap.

‘‘Now it’s easier because we have a narrower focus."

Officials said they were now concentrating on underground factories and distribution points and had seized the pirated discs destroyed Tuesday during a big operation in mid-June.

Alexei Sidorov, an expert with the Russian Anti-Software Piracy Association, which is funded by software manufacturers, said about 1.5 million fake discs, costing 25 to 45 cents each, were manufactured in the Moscow area every month.

Many contain thousands of dollars’ worth of software by offering many different programs on one CD.

Such rampant piracy translates into millions of dollars in lost sales. Pichakhchi said Microsoft made $37 million in Russian sales last year, a number which would have been 10 times bigger had all software users paid full price.

Even though Russian officials say they want to stamp out piracy, city-regulated markets continue to feature pirated CDs.

‘‘If you close a market in one place...it will crop up in a different place because there is such a high demand for the product," said Inessa Grikurova, marketing manager for the Business Software Alliance.

Any move to close the markets could also prove politically unpopular for Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov, expected to be a key candidate in presidential elections in 2000, as consumers have grown accustomed to widespread low-cost CDs and films.

For example, in a country deprived of popular Western music for decades, a CD with every album of the Beatles, compressed and playable only on computers, can be bought for just $2.

Internet Sites Sell Personal Info

Private information unwittingly released by Internet users is not protected under federal guidelines because few Web sites adhere to them, according to a study released Tuesday.

Based on previous reports on Internet users and Web sites, the Center for Democracy and Technology said Congress should pass legislation to force compliance with guidelines issued by the Federal Trade Commission.

The lack of privacy protection on the Internet contributes to a pervasive ‘‘unease that someone’s watching you," the center’s counsel, Deirdre Mulligan, told the Senate Commerce Committee.

‘‘Internet privacy on the Internet should be the rule rather than the exception," she said.

To that end, Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont., chairman of Commerce’s communications subcommittee, has introduced legislation to require Web site operators to post privacy policies on their pages and allow consumers to direct those operators not to share their private information.

But Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain, R-Ariz., has sided with the FTC, refusing to move forward with legislation until it becomes clearer whether private industries on the Web can police themselves. That stance virtually kills Burns’ bill.

‘‘The Internet changes daily, if not hourly. Any regulation imposed today may be ineffective in protecting consumers tomorrow," McCain said in a statement. But, he warned, ‘‘the industry should not be misled into thinking that these results represent some type of pass on future legislation."

McCain noted that a study by Georgetown University found that 94 percent of the most frequently used 100 Web site have privacy disclosure, as do two-thirds of randomly visited sites.

But Mulligan and Marc Rotenberg, director of the Electronic Privacy Information Center, told lawmakers that many of those disclosures do nothing else - such as explain how a consumer might refuse to allow his or her information to be sold or shared.

‘‘Privacy policy is not the same as privacy protection," Rotenberg told the panel. If Congress does not provide better enforcement and clearer guidelines, consumers will be faced with a choice to ‘‘either use the Internet and give up their privacy, or stay off the Net," he added.

Try www.Divorce For A Quick And Cheap Separation

Warring British couples are being offered a chance to divorce with just a few clicks on the Internet.

More than 300 couples had downloaded divorce documents since the service was launched last week by a company called Desktop Lawyer, the Observer newspaper reported Sunday.

It said the company was promoting the 80 pound ($126.3) service as a cheap and quick way to obtain an uncontested divorce, compared to going through a firm of solicitors which would cost around 400 pounds ($631.4).

The service begins with a visit to the company’s Web site to answer questions online. Desktop Lawyer’s program then drafts all the legal documents and gets them ready for downloading.

Religious groups reacted furiously to the service, saying it removed any chances of reconciliation.

‘‘There’s something very impersonal about having to do it online," said Patricia Hardcastle, a spokeswoman for the Roman Catholic Church.

‘‘Nobody wants to go through it, but at least we had to do everything face-to-face, which might have made people stop and think."

Desktop Lawyer’s legal director Richard Cohen said: ‘‘Just because it’s easy, it doesn’t mean it’s going to incite people to get divorced.

‘‘Up till now people had to use a solicitor -- we’ve made a daunting task a bit easier."

($1-.6335 Pound)

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